

## Message Text

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S/S - MR. SEBASTIAN

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TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (KISSINGER)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HEREWITH FULL TEXT DON OBERDORFER AND MORTON MINTZ FRONT PAGE BYLINER WASHINGTON POST TUESDAY, DECEMBER 28, HEADED "CARTER SETS MIDEAST, SALT BIDS/MEETING BREZHNEV IN '77 IS TERMED 'LIKLEY PROSPECT.'"

2. A SERIES OF POTENTIAL FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVES BY PRESIDENT-ELECT JIMMY CARTER, INVOLVING STRATEGIC ARMS TALKS WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND MEETINGS WITH ISRAELI AND ARAB LEADERS ABOUT MIDDLE EAST PEACE, WAS DISCLOSED YESTERDAY.

3. ENROUTE TO THE FIRST OF THREE DAYS OF MEETINGS WITH HIS CABINET DESIGNEES AT ST. SIMONS ISLAND, GA., CARTER SAID THAT A MEETING WITH SOVIET PARTY LEADER LEONID BREZHNEV IS "A LIKELY PROSPECT FOR 1977," ALTHOUGH SPECIFIC PLANS

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HAVE NOT YET BEEN MADE.

4. AMPLIFYING THE POINT IN A TIME MAGAZINE INTERVIEW RELEASED YESTERDAY, CARTER EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT A NEW STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TALKS (SALT) AGREEMENT TO BE NEGOTIATED BY THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION BY NEXT FALL

WILL EXPAND ON PRESENT LIMITATIONS AND THAT DISCUSSIONS  
WOULD "LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR MUCH MORE DRASIC REDUCTIONS  
IN COMMON NUCLEAR CAPABILITIES."

5. CARTER REPORTED THAT PRELIMINARY EXCHANGES BETWEEN HIM-  
SELF AND BREZHNEV HAVE EXPLORED THE POSSIBILITY OF REDUC-  
ING THE AGREED CEILING ON STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE WEAPONS BE-  
LOW THAT TENTATIVELY APPROVED BY PRESIDENT FORD AND BREZH-  
NEV AT VLADIVOSTOK IN NOVEMBER, 1974. AS HE INDICATED  
DURING HIS CAMPAIGN, CARTER SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO ARRANGE  
AN ACTUAL REDUCTION IN THE NUCLEAR ARMS OF THE TWO SIDES,  
INCLUDING SOME DESTRUCTION OF EXISTING WEAPONS.

6. ASKED BY REPORTERS YESTERDAY ABOUT THE RELATIVE MILI-  
TARY STRENGTH OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION,  
CARTER REPLIES, "I THINK IT'S APPARENT THAT THEIR RATE OF  
GROWTH OF MILITARY STRENGTH COMPARED TO OURS HAS PROBABLY  
BEEN FAIRLY SUBSTANTIAL, BUT WE'RE STILL FAR STRONGER THAN  
THEY ARE IN MOST MEANS OF MEASURING MILITARY STRENGTH."

7. PUBLISHED REPORTS SAID A NEW CIA ESTIMATE, WHICH WILL  
AWAIT CARTER FOLLOWING HIS INAUGURATION, TAKES A MORE SOM-  
BER VIEW THAN THOSE OF RECENT YEARS ABOUT A SOVIET DRIVE  
TO SURPASS THE UNITED STATES IN STRATEGIC ARMAMENTS.

8. ON THE MIDDLE EAST, CARTER TOLD TIME THAT HE BELIEVES  
THE FIRST STEP TOWARD RESUMPTION OF COMPREHENSIVE PEACE  
NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE MEETINGS BETWEEN HIMSELF AND ISRAELI  
AND ARAB LEADERS.

9. HE MENTIONED ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER YITZHAK RABIN,  
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EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT ANWAR SADAT AND SYRIAN PRESIDENT HAFEZ  
ASSAD AND SAID HE CONTEMPLATES MEETINGS WITH UNIDENTIFIED  
"OTHERS." AFTER THESE SESSIONS, THE UNITED STATES MIGHT  
MADE A PUBLIC PROPOSAL TO INITIATE PEACE TALKS, HE SAID.

10. CARTER EXPRESSED UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE TIMING, SAY-  
ING HE HAS NOT DECIDED WHETHER IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE TO  
CONVENE EXPLORATORY MEETINGS PRIOR TO THE ISRAELI NATIONAL  
ELECTIONS, REPORTEDLY TO BE HELD MAY 17.

11. THE SUGGESTION OF MEETINGS INVOLVING HIMSELF AND  
SENIOR LEADERS IS THE FIRST INDICATION OF THE LEVEL AT WHI  
CH CARTER EXPECTS TO HANDLE THE DIFFICULT PROBLEM OF MIDDLE  
EAST NEGOTIATIONS. EARLIER THIS MONTH HE SAID PEACE EFF-  
ORTS IN THAT REGION WOULD BE "AMONG THE VERY HIGHEST AND  
EARLIEST PRIORITIES" OF HIS ADMINISTRATION.

12. CARTER'S MEETINGS WITH SOVIET AND MIDDLE EASTERN

LEADERS EVIDENTLY WOULD TAKE PLACE IN THE UNITED STATES IF HE CAN ARRANGE THEM. HE SAID LAST WEEK HIS INTENTION IS

TO REMAIN WITHIN THE COUNTRY, WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS, DURING 1977. HE MADE CLEAR IN THE TIME INTERVIEW THAT HIS PREFERENCE IS TO MEET BREZHNEV IN THE UNITED STATES.

13. DIPLOMATIC SOURCES SAID CARTER'S PLAN TO MEET ISRAELI AND ARAB LEADERS APPEARS TO BE HIS WAY OF SEEKING A RENEWED SENSE OF MOMENTUM TOWARD A SETTLEMENT IN THE REGION WITHOUT ENDORSING THE ARAB DEMAND FOR AN EARLY RETURN TO THE GENEVA PEACE CONFERENCE. THERE WAS UNCONFIRMED REPORTS IN ARAB CAPITALS OVER THE WEEKEND THAT CARTER MIGHT SEND AN EMISSARY TO THE MIDDLE EAST TO EXPLORE CHANCES FOR PEACE, AN INITIATIVE STILL BELIEVED TO BE A POSSIBILITY.

14. ISRAEL'S RABIN, WHO IS FACING A LIKELY FIGHT FOR REMOVAL AS PRIME MINISTER AT THE CONVENTION OF THE RULING UNCLASSIFIED

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LABOR PARTY IN FEBRUARY AND A FULLSCALE ELECTION CAMPAIGN IN THE SPRING, IS REPORTED TO BE EAGER FOR AN EARLY MEETING WITH CARTER TO ENHANCE HIS DOMESTIC PRESTIGE.

15. DIPLOMATIC SOURCES BELIEVE IT IS LIKELY THAT EGYPT'S SADAT WOULD AGREE TO VISIT WASHINGTON IN PURSUIT OF MIDDLE EAST PEACE. THERE IS GREATER DOUBT ABOUT SYRIA'S ASSAD, WHO HAS NEVER VISITED THE UNITED STATES AND WHO HAS TAKEN A STIFF POSITION IN PREVIOUS ARAB-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS.

16. SAUDI ARABIA'S KING KHALID AND CROWN PRINCE FAHD, AND JORDAN'S KING HUSSEIN, ARE AMONG THE OTHER SENIOR MIDDLE EASTERN LEADERS WHO WOULD HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT. REPRESENTATIVES OF PALESTINIAN GROUPS--INCLUDING THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION, WHICH THE UNITED STATES HAS REFUSED TO DEAL WITH SO FAR--WOULD ALSO PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN ANY SETTLEMENT.

17. CARTER'S RELATIONS WITH THE ARAB WORLD ARE LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED BY HIS ATTITUDE AND THAT OF CONGRESS REGARDING LEGISLATION AIMED AT BLOCKING U.S. PARTICIPATION IN THE ARAB BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL. A STRONG ANTI-BOYCOTT MEASURE CLEARED BOTH HOUSE AND SENATE IN THE PAST SESSION, BUT WAS STOPPED SHORT OF FINAL PASSAGE AT THE URGING OF FORD ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS CONCERNED ABOUT U.S.-ARAB RELATIONS.

18. CARTER SHARPLY CRITICIZED FORD AND ATTACKED THE ARAB BOYCOTT IN STRONG TERMS DURING THE CAMPAIGN. HE REITERATED HIS ATTACK DEC. 16 IN A MESSAGE TO THE AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS, DECLARING THAT "THERE IS NO ROOM IN THE INTERNATION-

AL ARENA" FOR "FOREIGN DISCRIMINATION" AGAINST AMERICANS  
"ON GROUNDS OF THEIR RACE, THEIR RELIGION OR THE COUNTRIES  
WITH WHICH THEY TRADE."

19. AN AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS SPOKESMAN SAID YESTERDAY  
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ITS RECOMMENDATIONS ARE BEING FORMULATED FOR DISPATCH TO  
CARTER, ADDING THAT THE GROUP IS "OPTIMISTIC" THAT A STRONG  
ANTI-BOYCOTT PROVISION WILL BECOME LAW NEXT YEAR.

20. CARTER MET YESTERDAY AFTERNOON WITH HIS ECONOMIC ADVI-  
SERS, INCLUDING TREASURY SECRETARY-DESIGNATE W. MICHAEL  
BLUMENTHAL, BUDGET DIRECTOR-DESIGNATE THOMAS B. (BERT)  
LANCE AND CHARLES SCHULTZE, WHO IS TO BE CHAIRMAN OF THE  
COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS. VICE PRESIDENT-ELECT WALTER F.  
MONDALE, LABOR SECRETARY-DESIGNATE F. RAY MARSHALL AND  
CHARLES KIRBO, THE ATLANTA LAWYER WHO IS A LONGTIME CARTER  
CONFIDANT, SAT IN ON THE MEETING.

21. THE PRESIDENT-ELECT DECLINED TO BE SPECIFIC ABOUT A TAX  
CUT OR OTHER MEASURES WHEN QUESTIONED BY REPORTERS BEFORE  
THE SESSION. LANCE SAID OF A POSSIBLE TAX CUT GOAL ON THE  
'ORDER OF \$15 BILLION, "THAT'S STILL THE FIGURE I MOST HEAR."

(END TEXT)  
ROBINSON

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